

Antinomianism And The Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos

- I. An Antinomian Enquiry.
- II. Towards Appreciating Myatt's Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos.
- III. Interpreting The Rejection Of National Socialism By A Neo-Nazi.
- Appendix A: War, Persecution, and Violence.

XXX

I. An Antinomian Enquiry

On what is on one calendar in common use the twenty-first century, an interesting and to a certain extent a heretical question to ask is: why is the mystical philosophy developed by an individual once publicly described as one of "the twenty most dangerous extremists in the world" [1] who has written extensively about his rejection of extremism, [2] either ignored in academia and elsewhere or considered to be a deception by a devious man? Is it because old unproven allegations and pejorative rumours about him are still propagated today forty years after they were first made, and if so why.

Or is it because that mystical philosophy is an antinomian one? Where the term antinomian, in modern parlance and secular usages, denotes opposition to established norms, especially religious or societal ones. This modern usage is often considered to derive from Immanuel Kant's metaphysics where his 'antinomy' suggested a contradiction between two principles or ideas, a paradox; although the alternative, 'a conflict of authority' as in de Quincey's 1842 essay *Cicero* [3] is in our opinion more useful.

As employed here the term implies:

"defiance of, or opposition to, the customs, the beliefs, the authority of the modern nation-State with its *idées fixes* which include the idea that the nation-State through its government, its institutions, and its laws is the ultimate authority and judge of what is 'right' and 'wrong', not the judgment of the individual, and which supra-personal authority can and should be enforced by the nation-State through a police force or a law-enforcement agency, through the Courts, and if necessary through its armed forces all of which operate through a hierarchical chain-of-command."

Myatt's antinomianism is expressed: (i) by his philosophy of pathei-mathos which is in many ways revolutionary with its emphasis on personal empathy, on personal honour, and its dissection of causal abstractions, the denotata; which abstractions not only inform and now motivate the governments of the modern West but also, because of their embedded dialectic of opposites, which with their conflict perpetuate the cycle of suffering; [4] (ii) by what is arguably his rejection, in that philosophy, of the concept, the abstraction of the nation-State; (iii) the new individualistic paganism that can be developed from Myatt's works; and (iv) by his renaissance of the roots of Western culture which are Greco-Roman, Hellenistic, paganism and not the Hebraistic culture - based around the Old and New Testaments - whose morality and tenants, as in the Augustinian concept of *bellum justum*, still informs and are used to justify the actions of nation-states. [5]

His antinomianism is also expressed by the zealous opposition to and hatred of him by particular individuals, politicians, political advocacy groups, and others, many of whom declare themselves to be 'antifascists' and/or fighting 'extremism'; many of whom have also spent years trying to discredit him by making allegations and spreading rumours about him; and all of whom have consistently ignored his rejection of extremism, [6] his regret regarding his extremist past, and his philosophy of pathei-mathos. [7]

The current reality is that the strategy and tactics of the Establishment and its minions has been remarkably successful in diverting attention away from what some individuals understand as Myatt's

core heresy: his mystical philosophy of pathei-mathos which uncovers the dialectical nature of the causal abstractions inherent in all ideologies, be they deemed 'extremist' or otherwise, and in causal constructs such as the nation-state. As he writes in the Introduction to the seventh edition of his *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*,

[We] human beings have continued to manufacture abstractions and continue to assign individuals to them, a useful example being the abstraction denoted by the terms The State and The Nation-State and which abstraction, with its government, its supra-personal authority, its laws, its economy, and its inclusion/exclusion (citizenship or lack of it) has come to dominate and influence the life of the majority of people in the West.

Ontologically, abstractions – ancient and modern – usurp our connexion to Being and to other living beings so that instead of using wordless empathy and pathei-mathos as a guide to Reality we tend to define ourselves or are defined by others according to an abstraction or according to various abstractions. In the matter of the abstraction that is The State there is a tendency to define or to try to understand our relation to Reality by for example whether we belong, are a citizen of a particular State; by whether or not we have an acceptable standard of living because of the opportunities and employment and/or the assistance afforded by the economy and the policies of the State; by whether or not we agree or disagree with the policies of the government in power, and often by whether or not we have transgressed some State-made law or laws.

Similarly, in the matter of belief in a revealed religion such as Christianity or Islam we tend to define or understand our relation to Reality by means of such an abstraction: that is, according to the revelation (or a particular interpretation of it) and its eschatology, and thus by how the promise of Heaven/Jannah may be personally obtained.

Empathy and pathei-mathos, however, wordlessly – sans denotatum, sans abstractions, sans a dialectic of contradictory opposites – uncover physis: our physis, that of other mortals, that of other living beings, and that of Being/Reality itself. Which physis, howsoever presenced – in ourselves, in other living beings, in Being – is fluxive, a balance between the being that it now is, that it was, and that it has the inherent (the acausal) quality to be. [8]

To paraphrase de Quincey and to use a Ciceronian term, Myatt finds that the capital fault in the operation of the nation-state has long been in the antinomies of its civitas, with Myatt, referencing Cicero and Aristotle's meson and quoting from his own works, such as his *Classical Paganism And The Christian Ethos*, suggesting,

An ontology of physis: of mortals, of living beings, and of Being, as fluxive mesons. Of we mortals as a mortal microcosm of Being - the cosmic order, the κόσμος - itself with the balance, the meson, that empathy and pathei-mathos incline us toward a living presenced in the ancient Greek phrase καλὸς κάγαθός, "which means those who conduct themselves in a gentlemanly or lady-like manner and who thus manifest - because of their innate physis or through pathei-mathos or through a certain type of education or learning - nobility of character."

Which personal conduct, in the modern world, might suggest a Ciceronian-inspired but new type of civitas, and one

"not based on some abstractive law but on a spiritual and interior (and thus not political) understanding and appreciation of our own Ancestral Culture and that of others; on our 'civic' duty to personally presence καλὸς κάγαθός and thus to act and to live in a noble way. For the virtues of personal honour and manners, with their responsibilities, presence the fairness, the avoidance of hubris, the natural harmonious balance, the gender equality, the awareness and appreciation of the divine, that is the numinous."

With καλὸς κάγαθός, such personal conduct, and such a new civitas, summarising how the

philosophy of pathei-mathos might, in one way, be presented in a practical manner in the world.
[9]

Which scholarly [10] philosophical, and decidedly paganus, [11] analysis possibly explains not only why Myatt is now regarded by the Establishment as a heretic but also their mass media campaign against him.

Centuries ago the Establishment of the time had show-trials of those accused of heresy, such as the trial of Katherine Campbell in 1697 which ended with her being hanged and then thrown onto a bonfire. [12] In our era the Establishment usually considers it sufficient to publicly destroy a person's reputation by using the propaganda of their policy groups and the mass media, confident that by doing this what the person has to say or has written will be ignored by not only 'the people' but also by journalists and academics, for should anyone 'step out of line' their reputation and even their livelihood can be easily taken away and/or destroyed.

Will it be centuries, as it was for Katherine Campbell and her alleged accomplices, for the truth about Myatt to be revealed? Probably. If Western societies survive that long.

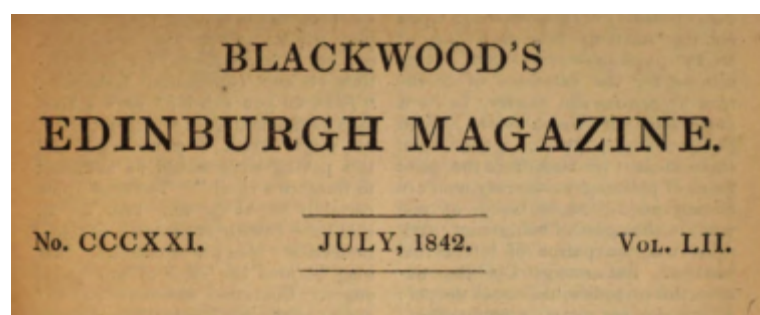
Haereticus Reputandus
2023

ooooo

[1] <https://web.archive.org/web/20210126120934/https://www.counterextremism.com/content/top-20-extremists>

[2] A gratis open access pdf version is available at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/david-myatt-rejecting-extremism.pdf>

[3] "The capital fault in the operative constitution of Rome had long been in the antinomies, if I may be pardoned for so learned a term, of the public service." The essay was published in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, July 1842.



[4] For an overview, refer to Myatt's *Physis And Being: An Introduction To The Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos*, pp.16-19 of the archive of his website at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2023/11/davidmyatt-website.pdf>.

[5] Refer, for example, to Myatt's essays *War and Violence in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way* and *Persecution And War*, which are included in Appendix A.

[6] Primary sources included original manuscripts germane to the subject or to a historical person; archaeological or fossil remains from an historical period; contemporaneous and authenticated manuscripts, letters, diaries, memoirs, personal journals, interviews, speeches, and other materials which describe or relate (i) events in which a person or persons participated in or observers of, (ii) ideas or creations, such as music, a philosophy, works of literature, poetry, and art-work which a person was responsible for and also their published writings in their original language, and manuscripts published and unpublished.

[7] Refer, for example, to section II, *Interpreting The Rejection Of National Socialism By A Neo-Nazi*, and to Myatt's *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism*, 2013, available (i) as a printed book ISBN 978-1484854266 and (ii) as a open access gratis pdf <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/david->

[8] The essay is included (pp.419-423) in the archive of his website at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2023/11/davidmyatt-website.pdf>

[9] *Physis And Being: An Introduction To The Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos*, pp.16-19 of the archive of his website at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2023/11/davidmyatt-website.pdf>

[10] A relevant footnote from Myatt's commentary on the Gospel of John - included (pp.225ff) in <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2023/11/davidmyatt-website.pdf> - illustrates both his erudition and his sometimes antinomian translations:

<quote> In *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum* Marcus Tullius Cicero, in criticizing Epicurus and others, presents his view of Summum Bonum, a term normally translated as 'the supreme good'. According to Cicero, honestum (honourable conduct) is the foundation of Summum Bonum which itself can be discerned by careful consideration (ratio) in conjunction with that knowing (scientia) of what is divine and what is mortal that has been described as wisdom (sapientia),

aequam igitur pronuntiabit sententiam ratio adhibita primum divinarum humanarumque rerum scientia, quae potest appellari rite sapientia, deinde adiunctis virtutibus, quas ratio rerum omnium dominas, tu voluptatum satellites et ministras esse voluisti. (II, 37)

He then writes that honestum does not depend on any personal benefit (omni utilitate) that may result or be expected but instead can be discerned by means of consensus among the whole community in combination with the example afforded by the honourable actions and motives of the finest of individuals:

Honestum igitur id intellegimus, quod tale est, ut detracta omni utilitate sine ullis praemiis fructibusve per se ipsum possit iure laudari. quod quale sit, non tam definitione, qua sum usus, intellegi potest, quamquam aliquantum potest, quam communi omnium iudicio et optimi cuiusque studiis atque factis, qui permulta ob eam unam causam faciunt, quia decet, quia rectum, quia honestum est, etsi nullum consecuturum emolumentum vident. (II, 45f)

In effect, Summum Bonum – what the Greeks termed τὸ ἀγαθὸν – depends on certain personal qualities such as a careful consideration of a matter; on a personal knowing of what is divine and what is mortal; on the example of personal noble deeds and motives, and on a communal consensus.

There is therefore nothing morally abstract or dogmatic about Cicero's understanding of Summum Bonum which so well expresses the Greco-Roman view, as does Seneca:

summum bonum est quod honestum est; et quod magis admireris: unum bonum est, quod honestum est, cetera falsa et adulterina bona sunt. *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, LXXI, 4

Thus, perhaps a more apt translation of the term Summum Bonum would be the highest nobility.
</quote>

[11] As Myatt notes in his 2017 *Classical Paganism And The Christian Ethos* he prefers the term paganus - a transliteration of the classical Latin, denoting as it does connection to Nature, to the natural, more rural, world - in preference to 'pagan' since paganus is, in his view and in respect of the Greco-Roman ethos, more accurate given what the term 'pagan' now often denotes. The work is included (pp.259ff) in <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2023/11/davidmyatt-website.pdf>

[12] Julian Goodare. *The Scottish Witch-Hunt In Context*. Manchester University Press, 2002.

II. Towards Appreciating Myatt's Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos

Abstract

We ask why David Myatt's mystical philosophy of pathei-mathos is unappreciated and why old unproven allegations and rumours about him are still propagated today.

We suggest it may be (i) because in Myatt's philosophy empathy and personal honour lead us away from the Judeo-Christian illusion of causal abstractions (a naming) and a dialectic of opposites based on such naming with the inevitable apocalyptic eschatology; and (ii) because his philosophy presents a modern and rational paganism based on Greco-Roman values and is therefore seen by certain antifascists as belonging to a new and emerging and dangerous "right-wing" milieu in which ancestral (native and pagan) European culture and a tradition of personal honour are central.

That David Myatt's mystical philosophy of pathei-mathos [1] is unappreciated today except by a few sagacious individuals is understandable given Myatt's extremist past – three decades (1968-1998) as a neo-nazi activist and ideologue, and almost a decade (1998-2008) as a supporter and ideologue of Muslim Jihad – which led to unproven allegations about him such as "it's hard to take anything Myatt says at face value, so successfully has he enshrouded himself in self-contradictory disinformation", and that he has a "history of deception", which allegations or claims his critics never support or supported with probative evidence based on primary sources. [2]

Such allegations are still made today despite Myatt's voluminous post-2011 writings about his rejection of extremism. Writings such as his 2013 book *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism: A Very Strange Peregrination* [3] and collections of essays such as his *Religion, Empathy, and Pathei-Mathos: Essays and Letters Regarding Spirituality, Humility, and A Learning From Grief* [4].

Which unproven allegations and their acceptance by many often politically-motivated individuals [5] may explain why there are no reasoned, or scholarly, critiques of, for example, Myatt's *Questions of Good, Evil, Honour, and God*, his 29 page monograph included in his book *Religion, Empathy, and Pathei-Mathos*. [4]

Good, Evil, Honour, and God

Which monograph is a relevant example of his writings about his philosophy of pathei-mathos, and in which monograph he compares the ontologies of Christianity, Islam, and the modern nation-state with the ontology he proposes for his own philosophy.

For example, after discussing the ontologies of Christianity, Islam, and the modern nation-state, he presents in Parts Four and Five his argument in favour of a personal ontology deriving from pathei mathos, as well as presenting his conclusions regarding the need to lead a tolerant, compassionate, honourable, way of life.

Thus in Part Four he writes that the aim is:

"to be in balance, in harmony, with Life; the balance that is love, compassion, humility, empathy, honour, tolerance, kindness, and wu-wei.

This, by its nature, is a personal answer and a personal choice; an alternative way that compliments and is respectful of other answers, other choices, and of other ways of dealing with issues such as the suffering that afflicts others, the harm that humans do so often inflict and have for so long inflicted upon others [...]

[There is] no need for dogma or too many words; no need for comparisons; no 'just cause' to

excuse our behaviour. No mechanisms and no techniques to enable us to progress toward something because there is no need or requirement to progress toward what is not there to be attained. There is only a personal living in such a way that we try to be compassionate, empathic, loving, honourable, kind, tolerant, gentle, and humble. And this is essentially the wisdom, the insight, the way of living – sans denotatum – that thousands upon thousands of people over millennia have contributed to the culture of *pathei-mathos*, as well as the essence of the message which many if not all spiritual ways and religions, in their genesis, perhaps sought to reveal: the message of the health of love and of our need, as fallible beings often inclined toward the unbalance of hubris, for humility."

Interestingly, and in reference to Christianity, in his *The Way Of Jesus of Nazareth: A Question Of Hermeneutics?* he writes that what he has found when translating the Gospel of John

"is rather reminiscent of what individuals such as Julian of Norwich, George Fox, and William Penn wrote and said about Jesus and the spiritual way that the Gospels in particular revealed.

This is the way of humility, of forgiveness, of love, of a personal appreciation of the divine, of the numinous; and a spiritual, interior, way somewhat different from supra-personal moralistic interpretations based on inflexible notions of 'sin' and thus on what is considered 'good' and what is considered 'evil'. A difference evident in many passages from the Gospel of John." [6]

In Part Five of *Questions of Good, Evil, Honour, and God* he explains the origins of his philosophy:

"Twenty years ago, someone whom I loved who loved me died, too young and having harmed no one. Died, leaving me bereft, if only for a while. For too soon my return to those hubriatic, selfish, suffering-causing, and extremist, ways of my pasts. As if, despite the grief, the pain of loss, I personally had learned nothing, except in such moments of such remembering that did not, unfortunately, impact too much upon my practicalities of life; at least until another bereavement, thirteen years later, came to shock, shake, betake me far from my arrogant presumptions about myself, about life, to thus lead, to so slowly lead, to me on a clear cold day yet again interiorly dwelling on what, if anything, is our human purpose of being here and why such bereavements, such early deaths, just seem so unjust, unfair."

Another relevant example is his *In Reply To Some Questions* (2012) in which he explains in greater detail the intent of his writings about extremism and about his philosophy of *πάθει μάθος* – the 'numinous way' – and that those writings

"have been written as expressions of my own feelings, experiences, and philosophical reflexions, with no particular audience in mind, save in many instance for a few personal friends. In effect, they document my interior struggles, my attempts to find solutions to certain philosophical problems, and my desire to understand the how and the why of my hubris, of my extremist decades, and thus to understand and acknowledge the mistakes of my past – to understand and acknowledge the suffering I caused – and understand the error of extremism itself [...]

What I hope to achieve by such writings is to communicate – or to attempt to communicate – some of my insights, some of my experiences, some of my solutions, and some of my conclusions, such as they are, and as personal and as fallible as they are, and dealing as they do with extremism, with an extremist life, and with the personal life of the hubriatic man I was [...]

My concern – and therefore that of the philosophy of *πάθει μάθος* – is with spiritual (numinous) and personal matters. With our own individual interior change and reformation; with the perspective and insight that empathy and *pathei-mathos* provide: which is of personal virtues such as compassion, love, humility, empathy, *πάθει μάθος*, honour, and *wu-wei*, and thus with treating human beings as individuals [...]

My writings over the past few years have been personal, 'mystical', and philosophical, with the

latter documenting the development and refinement of my 'numinous way' culminating in my moral philosophy of pathei-mathos which is concerned with individuals and how individuals might discover and learn to appreciate ἀρμονίη and δίκη and so move toward wisdom. So, what I wanted – rather, what I felt compelled to do following a personal tragedy – was to try and understand myself, my suffering-causing past; to try and discover what undermined ἀρμονίη and δίκη, and what ὕβρις was and what it caused and why." [7]

Is this as his politically orientated critics claim "disinformation and deceptive", or is it – like his *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism*, his *Questions of Good, Evil, Honour, and God*, and other such writings including his autobiography *Myngath* – a genuine expression of Enantiodromia, of the reformation of an individual? [8]

That Myatt's politically orientated critics have not penned reasoned, or scholarly, critiques of such Myattian works should be sufficient to answer that question.

A Modern Pagan Philosophy

One other reason why Myatt's mystical philosophy of pathei-mathos may be unappreciated today, and another possible reason why his politically motivated critics have not penned reasoned, or scholarly, critiques of that philosophy, is that his philosophy is, for many of those who have studied it, a modern pagan philosophy in the tradition of Greco-Roman philosophy.

In his 2019 autobiographical essay *An Indebtedness To Ancient Greek And Greco-Roman Culture* he explained that he uses some non-English terms mostly from Ancient Greek but occasionally from Latin,

"in the hope that such terms would not only be able to convey my meaning better than some easily mis-understood English term but also might be assimilated into the English language as philosophical terms either in their transliterated English form or in their Greek and Latin form.

Such terms might also reveal my indebtedness to Ancient Greek and Greco-Roman culture and how and why the philosophy of pathei-mathos is both a "transition from mythoi and anthropomorphic deities (theos and theoi) to an appreciation of the numinous sans denotatum and sans religion" and thus a return to individual insight and understanding over impersonal abstractions/ideations, over denotatum, and over religious and political dogma, with the Latin denotatum – used as an Anglicized term and which thus can be used to describe both singular and plural instances of denoting and naming – a useful example of my somewhat idiosyncratic methodology.

Thus and for example I used and use σοφόν instead of σοφός when the sense implied is not the usual "skilled", or "learned" or "wise" but rather what lies beyond and what was/is the genesis of what is presenced in a person as skill, or learning, or wisdom. I used and use σωφρονεῖν in preference to σωφροσύνη (sophrosyne) to suggest a fair and balanced personal judgement rather than the fairly modern English interpretation of sophrosyne as soundness of mind, moderation." [9]

In that essay he asks then answers a rhetorical question about using such Greek and Anglicized terms:

"Does my idiosyncratic use of Ancient Greek and Latin terms make this philosophy confusing, difficult to understand and difficult to appreciate? Perhaps. But since philosophia – φιλοσοφία – is, at least according to my fallible understanding, becoming a friend of σοφόν, and since such a personal friendship involves seeking to understand Being, beings, and Time, and since part of the ethos of the culture of the West – heir to Ancient Greek and Greco-Roman culture – is or at least was a personal and rational quest for understanding and knowledge, then perhaps some effort, as befits those of noble physis who appreciate and who may seek to presence καλὸς κάγαθός, is only to be expected."

In his 2017 monograph *Classical Paganism And The Christian Ethos* he explains the context and meaning of the term καλὸς κάγαθός, writing that

"we are, ontologically, emanations of and presence Being, and are a connexion to the cosmos – to other presencings of Being – through, in terms of epistemology, not only reason (λόγος), perceivance (νοῦς) and wordless-awareness (συμπάθεια, empathy) but also through τὸ ἀγαθόν, τὸ καλόν, and ἀρετή, through the beautiful and the well-balanced, the valourous and honourable, and those who possess arête, all of which are combined in one Greek phrase: καλὸς κάγαθός, which means those who conduct themselves in a gentlemanly or lady-like manner and who thus manifest – because of their innate physis or through pathei-mathos or through a certain type of education or learning – nobility of character. Which Greek phrase expresses the ethics, the high personal standards, of the ancient paganus weltanschauung we have been discussing." [10]

In his *Classical Paganism And The Christian Ethos* and in his other 2017 monograph *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua* [11] he writes of the difference between classical paganism and revealed religions such as Christianity.

That there is, in his view, a fundamental

"difference between a religious apprehension of the numinous – based on received and venerated texts, on exegesis – and the paganus apprehension of the numinous as manifest in Greco-Roman culture, based as it is on an individual, and an intuitive, empathic and thus wordless, apprehension of the numinous." [12]

This "empathic apprehension of the numinous" is at the core of Myatt's philosophy of pathei-mathos. In his *Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos* he writes that empathy is a means by which we can

"understand both φύσις and Πόλεμος, and thus apprehend Being as Being, and the nature of beings – and in particular the nature of our being, as mortals. For empathy reveals to us the acausality of Being and thus how the process of abstraction, involving as it does an imposition of causality and separation upon beings (and the ideation) implicit on opposites and dialectic), is a covering-up of Being." [13]

In *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, he writes that

"Greco-Roman culture is inextricably bound to the culture of the West and formed the basis for the European Renaissance that emerged in the 14th century, one aspect of which was a widespread appreciation of classical Art, of classical literature, and of texts such as the Corpus Hermeticum."

Which why his translations of eight tractates of the Corpus Hermeticum, and of other Greek texts,

"when studied together enable us to appreciate and understand the classical, pagan, ethos and thence the ethos of the West itself [...] What Myatt does in his translations [of the Corpus Hermeticum] is paint a picture of classical – and of Hellenic – culture and especially of Hellenic mysticism; a culture and a mysticism which is pagan and based on individuals, on tangible things such as honesty, and not on moralistic and religious and impersonal abstractions. That is, he reveals the Greco-Roman ethos – the pagan ethos – underlying the hermetic texts and which is in contrast to that of Christianity with its later, medieval and Puritanical, impersonal moralizing." [14]

Which understanding of the ethos of the West, sans Christianity, the politically orientated individuals and organizations who are vociferous critics of Myatt most probably view as heresy, as evidence that Myatt's philosophy of pathei-mathos undermines the Judeo-Christian culture and tradition that still forms the basis of many Western nation-states, and evidence also of how Myatt's philosophy may aid those who champion a particular and pagan interpretation of Western culture.

As one commentator noted, Western culture is

"exemplified according to Myatt by καλὸς κάγαθός. That is, by those who conduct themselves in a gentlemanly or lady-like manner and who thus manifest – because of their innate physis or through pathei-mathos or through a certain type of education or learning – nobility of character, and which nobility of character is manifest in the virtues of personal honour and manners, and which Western culture was also – according to Myatt and contra modern 'political correctness' – manifest in a natural and necessary aristocracy composed of those who possess nobility of character and who thus exemplify καλὸς κάγαθός." [14]

This interpretation of Western culture is, as Myatt expresses it in his *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, also

" (i) an (often wordless) awareness of ourselves as a fallible mortal, as a microcosmic connexion to other mortals, to other life, to Nature, and to the Cosmos beyond our world, and (ii) a new civitas, and one not based on some abstractive law but on a spiritual and interior (and thus not political) understanding and appreciation of our own Ancestral Culture and that of others; on our 'civic' duty to personally presence καλὸς κάγαθός and thus to act and to live in a noble way.

For the virtues of personal honour and manners, with their responsibilities, presence the fairness, the avoidance of hubris, the natural harmonious balance, the gender equality, the awareness and appreciation of the divine, that is the numinous."

Which "new civitas" – new communities, a new understanding of what being part of (a citizen of) such communities means; a new definition of freedom based on honour – strikes at the very foundations of the modern nation-state with its impersonal laws and in which modern nation-states where the 'law of personal honour' – one of the foundations of Myatt's philosophy [15] – if not outlawed is subject to often severe state-sanctioned restrictions.

As Myatt noted in his *Questions of Good, Evil, Honour, and God*,

"My own and only fallible answer to the question of how to deal with the suffering that blights this world therefore seems to be the answer of a personal honour. That is, for each of us to gently try to carry that necessary harmony, that balance, of δίκη, wordlessly within; to thus restrain ourselves from causing harm while being able, prepared, in the immediacy of the moment, to personally, physically, restrain – prevent – others when we chance upon such harm being done. This, to me, is Life in its wholesome natural fullness – as lived, presenced, by the brief, mortal, consciously aware, emanations we are; mortal emanations capable of restraint, reason, culture, and reforming change; of learning from our pathei-mathos and that of others. My personal answer to personal questions, perplexion, and to grief and doubt. The answer which is to live in hope – even need – of a personal loyal love; to live with empathy, gentleness, humility, compassion, and yet with strength enough to do what should be done when, within the purview of our personal space, we meet with one or many causing suffering and harm, no thought then for the fragility of our own mortal life or even for personal consequences beyond the ἀρμονία we, in such honourable moments, are."

In an essay written in September 2014 he explained that

"personal honour – which presences the virtues of fairness, tolerance, compassion, humility, and εὐταξία – [is] (i) a natural intuitive (wordless) expression of the numinous ('the good', δίκη, συμπάθεια) and (ii) of both what the culture of pathei-mathos and the acausal-knowing of empathy reveal we should do (or incline us toward doing) in the immediacy of the personal moment when personally confronted by what is unfair, unjust, and extreme.

Of how such honour – by its and our φύσις – is and can only ever be personal, and thus cannot be extracted out from the 'living moment' and our participation in the moment." [16]

By expressing a new civitas based on the concept of personal honour and on the noble virtues of καλὸς κἀγαθός, Myatt's rather unique philosophy, evolved as it has been by his *Classical Paganism And The Christian Ethos* and his *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua* monographs – might well be seen to be, according to the standards of the political status quo, as rather radical.

It might also become considered to be, or may already be considered to be, by some politically orientated individuals and organizations who profess to be "fighting extremism" – and who are still swayed by the Judeo-Christian illusion of causal abstractions and the dialectic of opposites – part of a new and emerging "right-wing" milieu in which ancestral (native and pagan) European culture and a tradition of personal honour are central. [11]

For, according to Myatt's philosophy, empathy and personal honour lead us away from the Judeo-Christian illusion of causal abstractions (a naming) and a dialectic of opposites based on such naming with the inevitable apocalyptic eschatology which engenders a real-world struggle or a war between a posited and a supra-personal, abstract, 'good' and 'evil'. An eschatology – struggle between a posited 'good' (us) and a posited 'evil' (our enemies) – which the modern nation-state has appropriated, as witness the propaganda against National Socialist Germany with its portrayal of The Third Reich as the 'evil' enemy who must be fought and defeated.

Myatt's philosophy leads us away from such abstractions, back toward the pagan insight of Greeks such as Heraclitus:

"Although this naming and expression [which I explain] exists, human beings tend to ignore it, both before and after they have become aware of it. Yet even though, regarding such naming and expression, I have revealed details of how Physis has been cleaved asunder, some human beings are inexperienced concerning it, fumbling about with words and deeds, just as other human beings, be they interested or just forgetful, are unaware of what they have done." [17]

In chapter three of his *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos* Myatt provides not only the Greek text of two other fragments by or attributed to Heraclitus but also his own translations:

"Polemos our genesis, governing us all to bring forth some gods, some mortal beings with some unfettered yet others kept bound." Fragment 53

"All by genesis is appropriately apportioned [separated into portions] with beings bound together again by enantiodromia." Diogenes Laërtius, ix. 7.

In that chapter he writes that

"Empathy also reveals why the assumption that abstracted, ideated, opposites apply to or should apply to living beings – and that they thus can supply us with knowledge and understanding of living being – disrupts the natural balance, resulting in a loss of ἁρμονίη [harmony] and συμπάθεια and is therefore a manifestation of the error of ὑβρις."

In place of such abstracted, ideated, Judeo-Christian conflicting opposites there is in both Greco-Roman paganism, and in Myatt's philosophy, Summum Bonum. As Myatt notes in his *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, quoting the Roman philosopher Seneca,

"What is injurious to such a [pagan] harmonious balance is what is dishonourable, with τὸ ἀγαθὸν – Summum Bonum – thus understood as honestum, as what is honourable, noble: summum bonum est quod honestum est; et quod magis admireris: unum bonum est, quod honestum est, cetera falsa et adulterina bona sunt. Seneca, Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales, LXXI, 4.

"the greatest good is that which is honourable. Also – and you may wonder at this – only that which is honourable is good, with all other 'goods' simply false and deceitful."

For honestum is how hubris can be avoided and balance maintained, and is the essence of καλὸς κἀγαθός which presences the numinous, the divine, in and among mortals."

This rational pagan understanding is worlds away from the abstractions of the modern nation-state and makes the unproven allegations, and the rumours spread, about Myatt now and over the decades by politically orientated individuals and organizations with an agenda who profess to be "fighting extremism"

seem to belong to a medieval world of heretics, hateful preachers, and zealous fanatics inspired by the prevalent Judeo-Christian culture and who seek to track down, to publicly shame, and to accuse their enemies – "witches" and "wizards" – of heresy.

MK et al
Oxonia
2023

ooooooo

[1] For an overview of Myatt's philosophy refer to *The Mystic Philosophy Of David Myatt*. The third edition is available as (i) a printed book, ISBN 979-8392761791 and (ii) an open access gratis pdf at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2021/08/myatt-philosophy-third-edition.pdf>

[2] The quotation "it's hard to take anything Myatt says at face value, so successfully has he enshrouded himself in self-contradictory disinformation" is from a 2018 internet article, by someone using the pseudonym Dylan Miller, titled *Beyond The Iron Gates* which repeats popular tropes about Myatt without providing any evidential facts; popular tropes which include one used several times by a certain person of a certain political persuasion: that Myatt lies "through his teeth".

Of tropes in general Richard Sheridan in his 1779 satirical play *The Critic* had his character Sneer say of the character Sir Fretful Plagiary that his tropes suited the coarseness of his style. In regard to the tropes about Myatt used by others, it could be suggested that they are suited to the coarseness of their beliefs about him.

[3] (i) A printed edition of *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism* is available: ISBN 978-1484854266 with (ii) a gratis open access pdf version at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/david-myatt-rejecting-extremism.pdf>

[4] Available at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/religion-and-empathy.pdf>

[5] One accusation, much repeated, is that Myatt is still a neo-nazi and as a consequence his post-2012 writings about rejecting extremism must be lies with his philosophy of pathei-mathos being a deception.

An amusing example of the accusations made about Myatt is provided in *Social Media Fun And Games With David Myatt* at <https://archive.org/download/false-claims/media-false-claims.pdf>

[6] <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/2017/09/30/the-way-of-jesus-of-nazareth/>

His translation of and extensive commentary on chapters 1-5 of the Gospel of John is available at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/gospel-john-chapters1-5.pdf>

[7] *In Reply To Some Questions* (2012), <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/questions-for-dwm-2012/>

[8] Myatt explains what he means by Enantiodromia in the *Enantiodromia and The Reformation of The Individual* and *The Change of Enantiodromia* chapters of his book *The Numinous Way of Pathei-Mathos* which is available (i) as a printed book: ISBN 978-1484096642 and (ii) as a gratis open access document at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf>

His autobiography *Myngath* is also available (i) as a printed book: ISBN 978-1484110744 and (ii) as a gratis open access document at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/david-myatt-myngath.pdf>

[9] <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/2019/04/23/an-indebtedness-to-ancient-greek-and-greco-roman-culture/>

[10] *Classical Paganism And The Christian Ethos*, <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/classical-paganism-v2-print.pdf>

[11] *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/tua-es-diaboli-ianua.pdf>

[12] *Tu Es Diaboli Ianua*, op.cit.

[13] <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/numinous-way-pathe-mathos-v7.pdf>

[14] *Western Paganism And Hermeticism: Myatt And The Renaissance of Western Culture*, <https://archive.org/download/myatt-paganism/myatt-paganism.pdf>

Myatt's translation of and commentary on tracts from the Corpus Hermeticum is available at <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2018/03/eight-tractates-v2-print.pdf>

[15] See, for example the chapter *Honour In The Philosophy Of Pathei-Mathos* in *The Mystic Philosophy Of David Myatt*, op.cit.

[16] *The Way Of Pathei-Mathos – A Précis*. The essay is included in *One Vagabond In Exile From The Gods: Some Personal and Metaphysical Musings*. <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2015/08/dwmyatt-sarigthersa-v7.pdf>

[17] In regard to the European – the Western – tradition of personal honour see, for example, William Segar, *Booke of Honor & Armes*, published in 1590. The book is available at https://books.google.com/books?id=LLI_AQAAMAAJ

[18] The translation of fragment 1 is by Myatt who in his *Questions of Good, Evil, Honour, and God* provides the Greek text:

τοῦ δὲ λόγου τοῦδ' ἔοντος αἰεὶ ἀξύνετοι γίνονται ἄνθρωποι καὶ πρόσθεν ἢ ἀκοῦσαι καὶ ἀκούσαντες τὸ πρῶτον· γινομένων γὰρ πάντων κατὰ τὸν λόγον τόνδε ἀπείροισιν ἐοίκασι, πειρώμενοι καὶ ἐπέων καὶ ἔργων τοιούτων, ὁκοίων ἐγὼ διηγεῦμαι κατὰ φύσιν διαιρέων ἕκαστον καὶ φράζων ὅκως ἔχει· τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους λανθάνει ὁκόσα ἐγερθέντες ποιοῦσιν, ὅκωσπερ ὁκόσα εὖδοντες ἐπιλανθάνονται

III. Interpreting The Rejection Of National Socialism By A Neo-Nazi

In 2012 a former British right-wing activist jailed for racist violence, an ideologue who for thirty years supported neo-nazism, published two articles explaining his reasons for rejecting National Socialism, in one of which he condemned Hitler as "a flawed individual who caused great suffering and whose actions and policies were dishonourable and immoral". A year later he was to write a 30 page semi-autobiographical essay analyzing extremism in general and his rejection of all extremisms.

Somewhat surprisingly, given his notoriety which included being arrested in 1998 for incitement to murder and incitement to racial hatred, the three articles were ignored by his antifascist opponents and even today, a decade later, the academics who have written about him and his neo-nazi activities and theorizing have never analyzed them.

The person in question is David Myatt, a former bodyguard of Colin Jordan, [1] one of the prominent figures in post-1945 neo-nazism; a member of the paramilitary neo-nazi group Column 88; [2] who took over the leadership of Combat 18 when its founder Charlie Sargent was imprisoned for murder [3] and

who allegedly wrote a terrorist manual which "provided a detailed step-by-step guide for terrorist insurrection with advice on assassination targets, rationale for bombing and sabotage campaigns, and rules of engagement." [4]

While there has been some speculation for this neglect of these three and other post-2012 anti-extremist writings of his [5] we shall attempt to analyze the two 2012 articles titled *Some Philosophical and Moral Problems of National-Socialism*, and *Hitler, National-Socialism, and Politics: A Personal Reappraisal*. [6]

Some Philosophical and Moral Problems of National-Socialism

In this article Myatt, referencing Aeschylus, Sophocles, and the Ἐρινύες, philosophically and scholarly criticized Hitler and National Socialist Germany in terms of Ancient Greek literature, mythology, and ὕbris (hubris) writing that:

"In purely practical terms, the acceptance and use of the principle of kampf together with the acceptance of Hitler as embodying the collective will of the volk, inevitably led to the military defeat of NS Germany. For all mortals are fallible and military defeat is always inevitable, given time and even if such a defeat has internal, not external, causes. For tyrants and monarchs die, are overthrown, or are killed; Empires flourish for a while – a few centuries perhaps, at most – and then invariably decline and fade away; oligarchies come and go with monotonous regularity, lasting a decade or perhaps somewhat longer; rebellions and revolutions will break out, given sufficient time, and will often succeed given even more time – decades, centuries – and even following repeated and brutal repression.

Thus, philosophically, the general error here by Hitler and his followers was the obvious one of ὕbris. A lack of understanding, an unknowing, of the natural balance – of δίκη – as well as a lack of empathy, manifest as this unknowing, this lack, was in the arrogant belief of a personal and a volkish 'destiny' combined with a belief in kampf as a natural and necessary expression of human nature. And ὕbris φυτεύει τύραννον – that is, ὕbris plants, is the seed of, the τύραννον. Thus, symbolically, we might justifiably say that the Ἐρινύες took their revenge, for Hitler and his followers had forgotten, scorned, or never known the wisdom, the truth, that their fallible mortal lives are subject to, guided by, Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύε [...]

In effect, therefore, and in general terms, the National-Socialism of Adolf Hitler was un-wise; based on a mis-understanding of human nature, and he himself shown, despite his remarkable achievement of gaining power, as lacking a reasoned, a well-balanced, judgement (σωφρονεῖν) - since such a balanced judgement would, as Aeschylus explained in the Oresteia, reveal that πόλεμος always accompanies ὕbris and that only by acceptance of the numinous authority of πάθει μάθος (the new law presented to mortals by immortal Zeus) could the tragic cycle of ἔρις be ended."

Since National Socialist Germany, The Third Reich, lasted a mere decade and the following Großdeutsches Reich only three years this criticism is justified.

In moral terms Myatt referencing his Numinous Way philosophy - later expanded into his weltanschauung of pathei-mathos [7] - provides a more detailed analysis, writing that National Socialism may be defined by:

- (i) a collective identity and its acceptance;
- (ii) authority and its acceptance manifest in specific individuals and expected obedience to such authority; (iii) mandatory enforceable punishment of those contravening or not accepting such authority and the laws made by such authority;
- (iv) the use of particular abstractions (for example nation and race) as a criteria for judgement and for evaluating individual worth;

(v) the use of particular abstractions as a criteria for identity; and (vi) the use and acceptance of a particular abstraction – *kampf* – as an embodiment and expression of human nature.

He then contrasts each of these with the principles of his Numinous Way. For example, in respect of point (i) he explains that:

"empathy, as a natural if still under-used and under-developed human faculty, is only and ever individual and of the immediacy of the living moment. It is always personal, individual, and cannot be abstracted out from an individual living being – that is, it cannot have any causal ideation or be represented by or expressed by someone else.

There is the personal, individual, freedom that the knowing that empathy uniquely presents to the individual, and therefore no need of, no sense of, belonging to other than one's immediate surroundings, and no sense of identity beyond the personally known, for all human beings encountered are encountered and empathically known as they uniquely are: as individuals with their own lives, feelings, hopes, and with their own potential and their own past.

Which in essence means The Numinous Way is the way of individuals, and an individual manner of living to be accepted or rejected according to the individual. Thus such a collective identity – and a desire for and acceptance of such an identity – is contrary to this very individual numinous way. What matters for The Numinous Way is the individual; their empathy, their honour; their personal judgement. What does not matter are supra-personal manufactured abstractions such as a 'nation'.

Consequently, the empathic, honourable, individual only has a duty to themselves, to their immediate kin, and to those personally given a pledge of loyalty: not a duty or obligations to some manufactured collective identity however such identity be expressed."

In regard to point (iv) for example he explains that:

"According to both empathy and honour, such a judgement of others, such prejudice, on the basis of some abstraction such as perceived race or 'nationality' is immoral. The only moral, honourable, criteria is to judge individuals as individuals, sans all abstractions, on the basis of a personal knowing of them extending over a duration of causal Time. To judge en masse, without such a direct, personal, extended, personal knowing of each and every individual is reprehensible.

In addition, it is immoral – unempathic, uncompassionate, dishonourable – to treat people on the basis of their assumed or alleged race or nationality. Thus, the enforced herding of people into 'concentration camps' on the basis of alleged, assumed, race or nationality is quite unjustifiable, inhuman."

In regard to point (v) he writes that:

"Such abstractions included 'blood' and nationality, so that identity became a matter of individuals being classified – by themselves, others, and by the State – according to certain chosen abstract criteria based on 'race' and heritage. Thus there were distinct notions, distinct levels, of separateness.

Empathy, however, presents us with an acausal-knowing of life, human and otherwise, and this knowing is of ourselves as but one fallible, biologically fragile, mortal, microcosmic nexion, and thus of how our self, our perceived and singular separate self-identity, is appearance and not an expression of the true nature of our being, which nature is one of connexions, between living emanations, not one of separations.

Such a revealing of our nature reveals that we should act with empathy and honour in the

knowledge that our actions affect others or can affect others, directly, indirectly, emotionally, and acausally. That their joy, their pain, their suffering, their fate is ours by virtue of us as a connexion to them – as a connexion to all life; as one emanation of ψυχή."

There is thus a consistent, logical, moral deconstruction of and rejection of National Socialism by a former neo-nazi activist of thirty years standing who has been described as "arguably England's principal proponent of contemporary neo-Nazi ideology and theoretician of revolution." [8]

It therefore seems astonishing that this consistent, logical, moral deconstruction of and rejection of National Socialism by a former neo-nazi has been ignored by antifascists, by government sponsored political policy groups pledged to fighting racism and extremism, and by academics.

Hitler, National-Socialism, and Politics: A Personal Reappraisal

Near the beginning of this essay Myatt quotes from a poem by TS Eliot:

And what you thought you came for
Is only a shell, a husk of meaning
From which the purpose breaks only when it is fulfilled
If at all.
Either you had no purpose
Or the purpose is beyond the end you figured
And is altered in fulfilment.

This, he writes, beautifully expresses where his new learning and thinking have led him and may be leading him; to rejecting the views and opinions of his past [9] and to better express what his Numinous Way philosophy means morally and personally. He is aware that he:

"may not have all or even many of the answers required, and that such answers as I do have, or some of them, might be erroneous and that therefore may need to be amended. Therefore, all I can do here is try in a rather unsatisfactory way to summarize such answers, such views, of mine."

The core of the article is one of his answers:

"the only moral change, the only revolution, that is possible – numinous, good – is that of ourselves; within and personal; and this is a reformation of ourselves and then our living of a moral, of an empathic, compassionate, honourable, life.

This precludes the possibility of such a moral individual supporting some cause, some group, some movement, some person, in the belief that such a cause, group, movement, or 'leader', can 'make a difference' or can or might in some way move us toward some future where there is less suffering [...]

The Numinous Way is, and can only ever be, an individual way; a non-political, non-religious, choice of individuals desirous of developing and using empathy and hopeful of leading honourable lives that do not cause or contribute to the suffering of living beings. Lives where one of the greatest virtues – a manifestation of our humanity – is considered to be a loyal and personal love between two human beings, regardless of the perceived or assumed ethnicity, nationality, social status, or 'sexual orientation', of the individuals concerned."

As with his *Some Philosophical and Moral Problems of National-Socialism* there is a consistent, logical, moral deconstruction and rejection of National Socialism.

Conclusion

We can only conclude that the neglect of this consistent, logical, moral deconstruction and rejection of

National Socialism by a former neo-nazi activist of thirty years standing is the result of a entrenched, prejudicial and peremptory, view of Myatt by current Establishments on both sides of the Atlantic.

Rachael Stirling
July 2023
v. 1.07

[1] Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Hitler's Priestess: Savitri Devi, the Hindu-Aryan Myth and Neo-Nazism*, NYU Press, 2000, p.215

[2] Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *Black Sun: Aryan Cults, Esoteric Nazism and the Politics of Identity*, NYU Press, 2001, pp.215-217. See also *Encyclopedia of White Power: A Sourcebook on the Radical Racist Right*, edited by Jeffrey Kaplan and published by Rowman & Littlefield in 2000.

[3] George Michael. *The Enemy of My Enemy: The Alarming Convergence of Militant Islam and the Extreme Right*. University Press of Kansas, 2006, p. 142.

[4] Michael Whine. *Cyberspace: A New Medium for Communication, Command and Control by Extremists*, Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, Volume 22, Issue 3. Taylor & Francis. 1999.

[5] The most common excuse for this neglect was voiced by a British, Establishment honoured, antifascist who prejudicially and peremptorily said that in such writings Myatt "is lying through his teeth." The comment was made to journalist Justin Ling in an interview published in March 2022.

[6] The two 2012 articles are available at <https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/moral-problems-of-national-socialism/>

The 2013 article is *Understanding and Rejecting Extremism: A Very Strange Peregrination*, <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/david-myatt-rejecting-extremism.pdf>

[7] This 'world-view' is explained in his 66 page monograph *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, seventh edition, 2022, <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf>

[8] George Michael. *The New Media and the Rise of Exhortatory Terrorism*. Strategic Studies Quarterly (USAF), Volume 7 Issue 1, Spring 2013.

[9] Myatt references an earlier article of his published in 2003 and titled *National-Socialism, Folk Culture, and a Muslim Khilafah* - available at <https://archive.org/details/myatt-ns-khilafah-v1> - written during his campaign as a Muslim to try and bring National Socialists and radical Muslims together to fight what he then still regarded as their common enemies. Myatt's campaign is documented in a chapter of George Michael's book *The Enemy of My Enemy*, op.cit.

Appendix A

War, Persecution, and Violence

1. War and Violence in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way.
2. Persecution And War.

ooo

Preface

Two rather neglected essays by David Myatt concerning war, violence, and persecution. The first essay

was written in early 2011 when he was in the process of refining his 'numinous way' into his philosophy of pathei-mathos.

As he subsequently explained:

"Given that the essence of The Numinous Way is individual empathy, an individual understanding, the development of an individual judgement, and the living of an ethical way of life where there is an appreciation of the numinous, the more I reflected upon this 'numinous way' between 2011 and Spring 2012, the more I not only realized my mistakes, but also that it was necessary to remove, to excise, the detritus that had accumulated around the basic insights and the personal pathei-mathos that inspired me to develop that 'numinous way'. Mistakes and detritus because for some time, during the development of that 'numinous way', I was still in thrall to some abstractions, still thinking in terms of categories and opposites, and still fond of pontificating and generalizing, especially about The State.

I therefore began to re-express, in a more philosophical manner, the personal, the individual, the ontological, the ethical and spiritual nature, of The Numinous Way, and thus emphasized the virtues of humility, love, and of wu-wei - of balance, of tolerance, of non-interference, of individual interior (spiritual) reformation, of non-striving, of admitting one's own uncertainty of understanding and of knowing. The year-long [2011-2012] process of refinement, correction, and reflexion resulted in me re-naming what remained of my 'numinous way' the philosophy of pathei-mathos." (1)

As Myatt expressed it in *A Change of Perspective* written in 2010:

"to paraphrase TS Eliot, here I am now, in the middle way I have devised for myself, having had many years, often wasted, the years between two wars within myself: "Trying to use words, and every attempt is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure." (2)

The second essay, *Persecution And War*, written in 2018, presents a more personal and nuanced view of the subject matter.

Rachael Stirling
2023

1. <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/development-of-the-numinous-way.pdf>
2. https://web.archive.org/web/20171109031141/https://www.davidmyatt.info/change_perspective.html

ooo

1. War and Violence in the Philosophy of The Numinous Way

The Morality of The Numinous Way

In order to understand the concepts of war and violence in terms of the philosophy of The Numinous Way, it is necessary to begin by outlining the morality of The Numinous Way, since war and violence are inseparably bound up with how one understands morality.

Morality is, for The Numinous Way, a consequence of individuals using the faculty of empathy [1] – that is, a consequence of the insight and the understanding (the acausal knowing) that empathy provides for individuals in the immediacy-of-the-moment. This insight and knowledge is of how we are not isolated human beings, but rather only one fragile microcosmic nexion and thus connected to all Life, sentient and otherwise, human and otherwise, of this planet and otherwise. Consequently, there is a cosmic perspective – a cosmic ethic – and compassion: that is, the human virtue of having συμπάθεια with other living beings, and the feeling, the knowledge, that we should treat other human beings as we ourselves would wish to be treated: with fairness, dignity, and respect.

The morality of The Numinous Way is therefore defined by a personal honour, a personal compassion, and the personal virtue of justice. For justice is not some abstract concept, but rather a personal virtue, as εὐταξία [2] is a personal virtue. For justice is the personal virtue of fairness; the quality of balance, and is linked to other personal virtues as mentioned, for example, by Cicero:

"Aliis ego te virtutibus, continentiae, gravitatis, iustitiae, fidei, ceteris omnibus." [3]

This morality is therefore a personal one so that it is the living individual of honour – someone who possesses certain virtues – who represents, who is, the cosmic ethics of The Numinous Way. For,

"the Cosmic Ethic [...] cannot live in some law, in some Institution, in some Court, in some dogma or in some abstract theory. To be numinous, to presence the numinous, what is ethical requires a living honourable person, not some abstract theory of ethics." *The Natural Balance of Honour* (2011)

Thus the source of, the authority for – and the reason for choosing – such a morality is and can only be the judgement of the individual, deriving as this judgement does from their empathy and their unique πάθει μάθος.

The Source of Authority

For The Numinous Way, there is no authority other than that of personal empathy, personal honour and πάθει μάθος. That is, the source of authority is personal, and the bounds of this authority are defined by honour, with The Numinous Way thus being:

"the Way of the numinous and individual authority of πάθει μάθος where one's own empathy and one's own learning from practical experience take precedence and are considered a means for us to become a friend of σοφόν and thus acquire the virtue and the skill that has been termed wisdom." *Preface, Selected Writings Concerning The Numinous Way* (2011).

In practical terms, this means that the individual following or being guided by this Way relies on and is guided by their own judgement, their own experience, and a Code of Honour, and does not relinquish these in favour of some chain-of-command or in favour of accepting the authority of some supra-personal institution, of some law, or of some association, political party or whatever. In place of accepting and submitting to such external authority there is only the giving of personal loyalty according to a Code of Honour, with such giving by its honourable and personal nature never involving the individual in relinquishing their own judgement or acting contrary to that Code of Honour. [4]

Violence, War, The State, and Leges Regiae

Used in its correct, original, non-pejorative way, violence is using physical force against another person sufficient to cause some physical injury. However, a fairly recent synonym for violence is force – a term often used by politicians and castellans and theorists of The State, among others, when they attempt to try and justify the use of violence by those persons (such as the police) such politicians and castellans (and others) believe have some 'lawful authority' to inflict injury on people.

The distinction that such politicians and castellans and others thus attempt to make between violence and force reveals their reliance, stated or unstated, known or unknown, on the principles of Leges Regiae. That is, on the principles used historically by kings and emperors and their courts where someone or some group assumes authority over others, and thus exercises command over them, makes decisions for or on behalf of them, and, ultimately, by the use of violence and the threat of punishment are able to force or persuade others to obey them and their commands.

Principles, for example, manifest in the ancient *Jus Papirianum* attributed to Sextus Papirius:

"After Romulus had distinguished the persons of higher rank from those of inferior condition, then he passed laws and apportioned the duties for each to do...

For the king, he chose the following prerogatives ... to maintain the guardianship of the laws and the national customs, ... to judge in person the greatest of crimes ... to have absolute command in war. " [5]

Notice how Romulus – the legendary King of ancient Rome – assumed the authority to divide individuals into categories – high and low – and how he manufactured laws, and told individuals what their duties would be, and assumed absolute command in war.

Modern nation-States have, via people such as Augustine of Hippo [5], simply replaced kings and emperors with Prime Ministers, Presidents, or representatives (or whatever) and covered or attempted to cover their use of violence (by their police forces and armies) and the threat of punishment (such as prison) by rhetoric about 'law and order' and by social and political theories (such as that of democracy). But the demand that individuals accept some supra-personal authority remains the same, as does the threat or the use of violence against individuals by officials appointed and approved by such personal authorities, as does the demand that individuals forsake their own judgement and rely instead on the judgement of ministers, governments officials, and on the Courts of Law of The State. In addition – as it was for the Roman kings and Caesars – the individual is expected to obey the laws they manufacture, with such laws being regarded as 'just' and moral.

Thus justice – far from being a personal virtue, defined by honour – becomes what some king, some Caesar, some τύραννος, or some government decrees it is according to the laws they manufacture and which their officials and their Courts uphold and enforce, by violence (or the threat thereof) and by imprisonment (or the threat thereof). Hence all the rhetoric by castellans and officials of The State that individuals "should not take the law into their own hands", whereas true – natural, numinous, living – justice only exists in living honourable individuals and their actions.

This usurpation of personal judgement and natural justice is overtly manifest in war. War – the bellum of Latin writers such as Cicero and Livy – is armed conflict involving large opposing groups where there is acceptance, by those fighting, of some recognized chain-of-command and of some supra-personal commanding authority who or which is or are personally unknown to most if not all of those accepting such authority, and where the conflict is mostly if not entirely non-personal for all or most of those involved. That is, war mostly or entirely results from the pursuit of some abstraction, or from the desire, the beliefs, of some leader or commander, or from the political or social or religious agenda or policies of some supra-personal authority such as some government.

In The Numinous Way, a distinction is made between war and combat in that combat refers to gewin – similar to the old Germanic werra, as distinct from the modern krieg. That is, combat refers to a more personal armed quarrel between much smaller factions (and often between just two adversaries – as in single combat, and trial by combat) when there is, among those fighting, some personal matter at stake or some personal interest involved, with most if not all of those fighting doing so under the leadership of someone they personally know and respect and with the quarrel usually occurring in the locality or localities where the combatants live.

Thus, war is contrary to The Numinous Way – to the Cosmic Ethic – not only because of the impersonal suffering it causes, but also because it is inseparably bound up with individuals having to relinquish their own judgement, with them pursuing some lifeless un-numinous abstraction by violent means, and with the development of supra-personal abstract and thus un-numinous notions of 'justice' and law.

Hence, there is, for The Numinous Way, no such thing as a 'just war' – for war is inherently unjust and un-numinous. What is just and lawful are honourable individuals and their actions, and such combat as such individuals may honourably and personally undertake, and such violence as they may honourably and of necessity employ in pursuit of being fair and ensuring fairness.

Notes

[1] For a basic explanation of empathy, see my essay *Introduction to The Philosophy of The Numen*.

[2] εὐταξία is what I would describe as the quality, the personal virtue, of self-restraint; of personal orderly (balanced, honourable, well-mannered) conduct especially under adversity or duress.

Regarding εὐταξία, Cicero wrote:

"Deinceps de ordine rerum et de opportunitate temporum dicendum est. Haec autem scientia continentur ea, quam Graeci εὐταξίαν nominant, non hanc, quam interpretamur modestiam, quo in verbo modus inest, sed illa est εὐταξία, in qua intellegitur ordinis conservatio. Itaque, ut eandem nos modestiam appellemus..." De Officiis, 1, 40, 142

[3] M. Tullius Cicero, For Lucius Murena, 10, 23. My translation is: 'For your other virtues of self-restraint, of dignity, of justice, of good faith, and all other good qualities...'

[4] Editorial Note, 2023. Myatt significantly altered his concept of honour during his 2011-2012, and later, revision of his 'numinous way', writing in his 2014 text *The Way Of Pathei-Mathos - A Précis* that personal honour

"presences the virtues of fairness, tolerance, compassion, humility, and εὐταξία - as (i) a natural intuitive (wordless) expression of the numinous ('the good', δίκη, συμπάθεια) and (ii) of both what the culture of pathei-mathos and the acausal-knowing of empathy reveal we should do (or incline us toward doing) in the immediacy of the personal moment when personally confronted by what is unfair, unjust, and extreme.

Of how such honour - by its and our φύσις - is and can only ever be personal, and thus cannot be extracted out from the 'living moment' and our participation in the moment; for it is only through such things as a personal study of the culture of pathei-mathos and the development of the faculty of empathy that a person who does not naturally possess the instinct for δίκη can develop what is essentially 'the human faculty of honour', and which faculty is often appreciated and/or discovered via our own personal pathei-mathos."

The text is included in his *One Vagabond In Exile From The Gods*, <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/one-vagabond-pathei-mathos.pdf>

Myatt also described his concept of honour in a 2022 interview:

"[M]y fallible understanding is that honour cannot be abstracted from a personal moment to become some sort of principle or guide, so my similar fallible understanding is that a person who learns by means of pathei-mathos cannot be or rather should not become such a guide or even an example and certainly should not assume any sort of guiding role." Three 2022 Interviews, included in the archive of his website at <https://archive.org/download/www.davidmyatt.info/www.davidmyatt.info.zip>

[5] The quotation is from the reconstruction of the texts given in: Allan Chester Johnson, Paul Robinson Coleman-Norton, and Frank Bourne. *Ancient Roman Statutes: A Translation with Introduction, Commentary, Glossary, and Index*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1961

[6] The assumed need for individuals to accept supra-personal authority is much in evidence in Augustine, especially in his *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos* in which he champions a order, a hierarchy, with God its pinnacle and ordinary individuals at the bottom. In between are those appointed to oversee individuals and ensure 'order' with everyone in their rightful place: "Ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio." (XIX, xiii)

As Augustine writes in *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* XXII, 75: "The natural order, which would have peace

amongst men, necessitates that the judgement about and the authority to declare war should reside in those who have authority over others [a monarch/prince]."

In addition, his rhetoric regarding the necessity of waging war is remarkably similar to that of modern politicians:

"War is undertaken to bring about peace. Therefore, even during war, remember the value of peace so that when those you have fought are conquered you can show them the advantages of peace..." Contra duas epistulas Pelagianorum ad Bonifacium Papam, CLXXXIX

He also, it seems, in writing about a 'just war', provided them with rhetorical justification for castigating their enemies as 'evil', as 'wicked' and they themselves, even though they may cause suffering and death, as doing what is 'right', what God decrees, as, for example, Bush and Blair did during the invasion and occupation of Iraq, and as with the desire of some nation-States to humiliate and vanquish those deemed as enemies. As Augustus wrote in *De Civitate Dei contra Paganos*:

"Nam et cum iustum geritur bellum, pro peccato e contrario dimicatur; et omnis uictoria, cum etiam malis prouenit, diuino iudicio uictos humiliat uel emendans peccata uel puniens."

For even when we wage a just war, our enemies must be sinners, for every victory then, even though gained by evil men, results from divine decree, with the vanquished humiliated and their sins either punished or wiped away. XIX, 15

ooo

Article Source: <https://web.archive.org/web/20120329200114/http://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/2011/10/25/war-and-violence-in-the-philosophy-of-the-numinous-way/>

ooooo

2. Persecution And War

A Remembering

Reared as a Roman Catholic, educated for a while at a Catholic preparatory school and then – again for a while – at a Catholic boarding school, I remember the history taught by our teachers and Priests of the centuries-long persecution of English and Irish Catholics that began in the 16th century. There were stories of martyrs; of recusants; of secret Masses; of anti-Catholic polemics and propaganda; and of the monks who – after the suppression of the monasteries, the theft of monastic lands and wealth, begun by a tyrannos named Henry – escaped to France and founded monasteries such as the one at Dieulouard in Lorraine.

There thus was engendered in we Catholic children a feeling of difference, aided by the fact that our Mass was in Latin, by our sacrament of confession, by the practice of Gregorian chant, and by the singing of hymns such as Faith Of Our Fathers with its memorable verses

Faith of our Fathers living still
In spite of dungeon, fire, and sword [...]
We will be true to thee till death [...]

Our Fathers, chained in prisons dark,
Were still in heart and conscience free [...]

Faith of our Fathers, Mary's prayers
Shall win our country back to thee

This feeling of difference was forcefully remembered when I in the early 1970's – during The Troubles – ventured to visit Northern Ireland; when I in the mid-1970's and as a Catholic monk spent several weeks

staying at a Presbytery in Dublin; and when I in the mid-1990's – before the Good Friday Agreement – visited Derry.

Forcefully remembered because I listened to accounts of the burning of Catholic homes by Protestant mobs in 1969 and the subsequent flight of hundreds of Catholic families to the Irish Republic where they were housed in refugee camps; listened to witness accounts of the killing of eleven Catholics, including a Priest, by the British Army in Ballymurphy in 1971; listened to witness accounts of the killing of fourteen Catholics, again by the British Army, in Derry in 1972; and listened to stories of the persecution of Irish Catholics under British rule.

Such a remembering, such a childhood feeling of difference, formed part of the years-long personal and philosophical reflexion that occupied me for several years as I, between 2006 and 2009, developed my 'numinous way' and then between 2011 and 2012 gradually refined it into the 'way of pathei-mathos', with the core of that reflexion concerning matters such as extremism, my own extremist past, war, prejudice, intolerance, and persecution.

War And Combat

Familiar as I was with ancient works by Thucydides, Herodotus, Livy, and others; with many works concerning more recent European history by modern historians, as well as with personal accounts of those who had fought for both the Allies and the Axis during World War Two, I recalled some words of Cicero:

"Aliis ego te virtutibus, continentiae, gravitatis, iustitiae, fidei, ceteris omnibus."

"because of your other virtues of self-restraint, of dignity, of fairness, of honesty, and all other such qualities..." [1]

Which led me to consider making a distinction between war and a more personal combat, between a modern krieg and the Old Germanic werra, given that war, from my reading of and admittedly fallible understanding of history, seemed to me to involve – by its very nature of necessitating killing and causing injury – intolerance, hatred, a divisive sense of difference often involving "us" believing we were "better" (or more civilized) than them, our enemies, thus leading to a dehumanization of "the enemy". A divisive sense of difference and a dehumanization often aided (particularly in modern times) by polemics, rumour, and propaganda; and a divisive sense of difference, a dehumanization, together with polemics, rumour, and propaganda, which I knew from my own decades of political and religious activism formed a core part of all types of extremism.

The distinction I considered was that personal combat unlike war did not involve large armies fighting against each other because of some diktat or personal agenda by some tyrannos or because of some ideology or religion or policy of some State or government. Instead, combat involved small groups – such as clans or tribes or neighbours – fighting because of some personal quarrel or some wrong or some perceived grievance.

But the more I considered this supposed distinction between combat and war the more I realized that in practice there was no such distinction since both involved principles similar to those of the Ancient Roman Leges Regiae – qv. the Jus Papirianum attributed to Sextus Papirius – where someone or some many possess or have acquired (through for example force of arms) or have assumed authority over others, and who by the use of violence and/or by the threat of punishment and/or by oratory or propaganda, are able to force or persuade others to accept such authority and obey the commands of such authority.

This acceptance by individuals of a supra-personal authority – or, more often, the demand by some supra-personal authority that individuals accept such a supra-personal authority – was manifest in the Christian writings of Augustine (b.354 CE, d.430 CE), such as his De Civitate Dei contra Paganos where in Book XIX, chapter xiii, he wrote of the necessity of a hierarchy in which God is the supreme authority, with peace

between human beings and God requiring obedience to that authority; with peace between human beings, and civil peace, also of necessity requiring obedience to an order in which each person has their allotted place, "Ordo est parium dispariumque rerum sua cuique loca tribuens dispositio."

Which hierarchy and acceptance of authority led Augustine to describe – in book XXII of *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* – the concept that war requires the authority of a person (such as a monarch) who has such "necessary" authority over others. This concept regarding war has remained a guiding principle of modern Western nations where the authority to inaugurate and prosecute a war against perceived enemies resides in the State, and thus in modern potentates who have seized power or in elected governments and their representatives such as Presidents and Prime Ministers.

Authority And Society

In the nations of the West, such a hierarchy of authority applies not only to war and its prosecution but also to changes, to reform, in society [2] for there is, as I mentioned in *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*,

"a hierarchy of judgement involved, whatever political 'flavour' the government is assigned to, is assumed to represent, or claims it represents; with this hierarchy of necessity requiring the individual in society to either (i) relinquish their own judgement, being accepting of or acquiescing in (from whatever reason or motive such as desire to avoid punishment) the judgement of these others, or (ii) to oppose this 'judgement of others' either actively through some group, association, or movement (political, social, religious) or individually, with there being the possibility that some so opposing this 'judgement of others' may resort to using violent means against the established order." [3]

In the way of pathei-mathos, authority is personal, based on individual empathy and a personal pathei-mathos; both of which have a local horizon so that what is

"beyond our personal empathic knowing of others, beyond our knowledge and our experience [our pathei-mathos], beyond the limited (local) range of our empathy and that personal (local) knowledge of ourselves which pathei-mathos reveals – is something we rationally, we humbly, accept we do not know and so cannot judge or form a reasonable, a fair, a balanced, opinion about. For empathy, like pathei-mathos, lives within us; manifesting, as both empathy and pathei-mathos do, the always limited nature, the horizon, of our own knowledge and understanding." [4]

In practical terms this means trying to cultivate within ourselves the virtues mentioned by Cicero – self-restraint, dignity, fairness, honesty – and implies we have no concern for or we seek to cultivate no concern for supra-personal hierarchies and supra-personal authority – whether political, religious, or otherwise – and thus move away from, try to distance ourselves from, the consequences of such supra-personal hierarchies and supra-personal authority manifest as the consequences are and have been, throughout our history, in war, prejudice, intolerance, unfairness, extremism, and persecution in the name of some ideology, some religion, or because someone has commanded us to persecute those that they and others have declared are "our" enemies, and which war and persecutions are often, especially in modern times, accompanied by propaganda and lies.

Thus in the case of my Catholic remembering, those soldiers in Ballymurphy and in Derry shot and killed civilians, women included, because those soldiers believed them to be "enemies", because propaganda had dehumanized those enemies; because those soldiers were part of and obeyed a hierarchical, supra-personal, chain-of-command by being there armed and prepared to use deadly force and violence against individuals they did not personally know; and because in the aftermath of those killings, and for years afterwards, they were not honest and hence did not contradict the propaganda stories, the lies, about those events which some of their superiors and others circulated in an attempt to justify such acts of inhumanity.

Yet for me the real tragedy is that events similar to those of my very personal remembering have occurred on a vaster scale millennia after millennia and are still occurring, again on a vaster scale and world-wide, despite us having access to the wisdom of the past, manifest as such wisdom is, for those reared in the West, in the Agamemnon of Aeschylus, in the Oedipus Tyrannus of Sophocles, in the mythos of Μοῖραι τρίμορφοι μνήμονές τ' Ἐρινύες [5], in many of the writings of Cicero, in Τὰ εἰς ἑαυτόν by Marcus Aurelius, in the numinous beauty of Gregorian chant, in the music of JS Bach, and in so many, many, other writers and artists ancient and modern.

Đa sceolde se hearpere weorðan swa sarig
þæt he ne meahte ongemong oðrum mannum bion
(XXXV, 6)

David Myatt
9.ix.18

ooo

[1] M. Tullius Cicero, Pro Murena Oratio, 23. My translation.

[2] By 'society' in the context of this essay and the way of pathei-mathos is meant a collection of individuals who dwell, who live, in a particular area and who are subject to the same laws and the same institutions of authority. Modern society is thus a manifestation of some State, and States are predicated on individuals actively or passively accepting some supra-personal authority, be it governmental (national) or regional (county), or more usually both.

[3] *Society, Politics, Social Reform, and Pathei-Mathos*, in *The Numinous Way Of Pathei-Mathos*, <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/numinous-way-pathei-mathos-v7.pdf>

[4] *Personal Reflexions On Some Metaphysical Questions*. 2015. Part IV of Sarigthersa, <https://davidmyatt.files.wordpress.com/2022/10/dwmyatt-sarigthersa-v9b.pdf>

[5] "Trimorphed Moirai with their ever-heedful Furies." Aeschylus (attributed), Prometheus Bound, 516

ooo

Article Source:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20220617103240/https://davidmyatt.wordpress.com/about/persecution-and-war/>

xxxx x xxxx